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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 005508

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DEPT FOR ISN/ECC PVANSON, ACHURCH, JGABRYSZEWSKI AND JLCOLLINS;
CBP/INA FOR CDONOFRIO;
DEPT FOR SCA FO DAS GASTRIGHT AND SCA/A
DOE/NNSA FOR RSTUBBLEFIELD;
DOC FOR ELOCKWOOD-SHABAT;
DOT FOR APARAMESWARAN;
SECDEF FOR MHOFFMANN, FLIGHT, AND RVIERKANT

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SUBJECT: EXBS Afghanistan Advisor Monthly Reporting Cable -
September 2006

REFS: A) KABUL 5339, B) KABUL 4916, C) TASHKENT 1866

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I. SUMMARY

11. (SBU) During this reporting period, EXBS Advisor worked with international donors and the Afghan Engineering District (AED) to de-conflict, provide input, and review status of the Border Crossing Points (BCPs) infrastructure projects. A timeline of infrastructure projects has been provided by the Afghan Engineering District (AED) for construction projects at the Islam Qalah, Towraghundi, and Shir Khan Bandar Border Crossing Points (BCP) to provide better security, more efficient port operations, and increased revenue collection.

12. (SBU) EXBS Advisor is working with all donors involved with equipping the 13 major BCPs and the 4 international airports to identify the needs and ensure compatibility of items procured.

13. (SBU) USG Border Management Initiative (BMI) staff is progressing with the staffing of a 12 person Border Management Task Force (BMTF). DOD funding will also allow for the hiring of 12 mentors that will be assigned to select BCPs. See para 24 for ACTION REQUEST.

14. (SBU) EXBS Advisor and the Border Management Initiative partners are monitoring DynCorp's re-establishment of their mentorship program with the Afghan Border Police (ABP) at the Islam Qalah and the Spin Boldak BCPs. DynCorp also announced their planned construction of 2 Forward Operating Bases (FOB) at Islam Qalah in the Herat Province and Spin Boldak in the Khandahar Province. These FOBs are needed to house DynCorp mentors closer to the BCPs located in these cities.

15. (SBU) On September 19 - 21, 2006, EXBS Advisor discussed with Emboffs from U.S. Embassy Tashkent a telephone line that had been installed at the Uzbek and Afghan BCPs for cross-border communications.

16. (U) During this reporting period, EXBS Advisor selected a Kabul resident as the EXBS Program Coordinator. The applicant has extensive experience in finance and revenue projects as an employee with the USAID contractor Bearing Point and the Ministry of Finance.

END SUMMARY

II. ITEMS OF BROAD INTEREST.

17. (SBU) During this reporting period, EXBS Advisor worked with international donors and the Afghan Engineering District (AED) to de-conflict, provide input, and review status of the Border Crossing Points infrastructure projects. To date, approximately 90% of the 13 major Afghan BCPs are in place, under construction, or have funding committed. This includes a \$13 million U.S.(JIACG)-funded new commercial BCP being constructed at Islam Qalah beginning in November 2006. This BCP is considered the largest revenue generating crossing point, accounting for almost 50% of all revenue collected by the Government of Afghanistan (GoA). Completion is expected to be in February 2008.

18. (SBU) A \$350K U.S.-funded project is also underway at the existing Islam Qalah BCP to improve the traffic flow, road surface, and security features. This upgrade will help support the operation of the facility during the construction of the new BCP.

19. (SBU) A \$600K U.S.-funded BCP project at Towraghundi is currently underway to upgrade the commercial depot for customs and the Afghan Border Police (ABP) immigration facilities. UNOPS has also

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constructed a customs administrative office to assist in the upgrade.

110. (SBU) The new Shir Khan Bandar BCP is currently under construction under a \$4 million U.S.-funded project which is expected to be completed in May 2007. The bridge connecting the Tajikistan and Afghanistan BCPs at this location is scheduled to be completed in May 2007. An additional European Commission \$14 million funded commercial depot at this BCP is scheduled for completion in December 2007.

111. (SBU) EXBS Advisor has compiled a list of equipment required at the 13 major BCPs that has either been provided or funded for procurement and a list of equipment needs yet to be funded. It is estimated that an additional \$8 million is required to provide the basic equipment needs at the majority of the BCPs. Larger items required for commercial operations, i.e., forklifts, cranes, weigh stations, service vehicles, furnishings and multiple types of scanners at the 13 major BCPs and the 4 international airports is estimated to cost \$90 million.

112. (SBU) During this reporting period the ISN/ECC Program Manager for South Asia initiated an Action Cable describing the procurement of equipment destined for the Islam Qalah and Towraghundi BCPs totaling over \$1 million. Equipment being procured includes x-ray screening machines for baggage and cargo, fiberoptic scopes, density meters, radioisotope identifiers, explosive detectors, handheld metal detectors, cranes, forklifts, vehicle inspection kits, and tool kits. EXBS Advisor and Embassy Econ Officer formally advised the Director General for the Afghan Customs Department (ACD) of the pending procurement for the BCPs and his personnel. The Director General requested, in coordination with the South Asia Program Manager, the EXBS Advisor to assist the ACD in procuring \$1 million in additional equipment for Customs at other BCPs to ensure compatibility.

113. (SBU) EXBS and the BMI continue to work with the security elements at the Kabul International Airport (KIA) to address security deficiencies such as new badging and vehicle pass systems;

radio communications; terminal and airside security measures; perimeter security; equipment needs; and training. A Japanese funded \$28 million project is beginning in October 2006 to construct a new terminal and an additional \$5 million for the new ramp area. These facilities are expected to be completed in 2009. In the interim, the European Commission is expending \$2 million for operational upgrades at the existing terminal while the new terminal is under construction.

¶14. (SBU) EXBS and the BMI have consulted with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) representative and secured \$2 million from the Ministry of Transportation to be used for security upgrades at KIA. Additionally, FAA has begun procuring as many as 8 large scanners and 8 handheld metal detecting wands totaling \$2.5 million to be used at KIA.

¶15. (SBU) EXBS Advisor examined the automated immigration system known as PISCES at KIA and found it to be fully upgraded and operational. Efforts are underway to provide an internet line for automatic transmission of data to the Ministry of Interior Headquarters where the database for PISCES is maintained. The ISN/ECC Program Manager for South Asia has negotiated for the PISCES system to be installed throughout Afghanistan.

¶16. (SBU) EXBS Advisor and the USG BMI representatives, in the Afghan Reconstruction Group (ARG), have received and are in the process of reviewing applicants for the Border Management Task Force (BMTF). The applicants thus far have been submitted through JIACG

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and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). JIACG is considering a proposal for a contracting mechanism to hire these individuals consistent with DoD funding restrictions. Efforts in Kabul are continuing to locate suitable working and living facilities for the task force members. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is also assisting in recruiting customs and immigration subject-matter experts. BMI participants from the international donor community and international subject-matter experts will also help make up the task force.

¶17. (SBU) EXBS Advisor and the Border Management Initiative are monitoring DynCorp's re-establishment of their mentoring program with the Afghan Border Police at the Islam Qalah and the Spin Boldak BCPs. The BMI is planning to augment this program by hiring 12 immigration and customs mentors for these and other BCPs while filling positions for the BMI Task Force. This program has proven successful in maintaining order at the BCP; providing oversight; implementing proper ABP procedures, roles and responsibilities; and reduction of low level corruption. A new Forward Operating Base (FOB) is under construction in Islam Qalah scheduled to be completed in November 2006. DynCorp is also constructing a facility within an existing FOB occupied by the Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) military unit to resume their mentorship at the Spin Boldak BCP. They have specifically been requested by ODA to resume their activities as part of a larger effort to improve the security situation in that region.

¶18. (SBU) On September 19 - 21, 2006 EXBS Advisor met Embassy Tashkent Emboffs near the Heratan BCP to discuss a telephone line that had been installed at the Uzbek and Afghan BCPs for increased cross-border communications. The meeting revealed that that the line, furnished through the EXBS program in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, wasn't operational because the installation was inside a newly constructed building at the Afghan BCP that had not officially been turned over to the Government of Afghanistan by UNOPS. The Afghanistan EXBS Advisor has taken steps to rectify the delay.

¶19. (U) TRAINING CONDUCTED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Nothing to report.

¶20. (U) EQUIPMENT DELIVERED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Under Procurement.

¶21. (U) IMMINENT TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT STATUS UPDATE.

Reference para. 12, the procurement process is underway. No delivery dates are available as yet, but EXBS Advisor is coordinating logistical arrangements such as temporary storage and language requirements for operator manuals.

¶22. (U) SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN EXPORT CONTROLS, NONPROLIFERATION, OR RELATED BORDER SECURITY.

Nothing to report.

¶23. (U) OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES/EVENTS.

A Kabul resident was selected by the EXBS Advisor as the EXBS Program Coordinator. The applicant, a graduate of the Islamabad, Pakistan Master of Business Administration Program at the University of Preston, has extensive experience with the Ministry of Finance in finance and revenue projects in the Takhar Province. The applicant was previously employed by the USAID contractor Bearing Point as a Financial Officer in a USAID-funded Economic Government Project at the Ministry of Finance in Kabul. The selectee is currently

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undergoing a background investigation being conducted by the US Embassy Regional Security Office.

¶24. (U) RED FLAG ISSUES.

ACTION REQUEST. Post requests that ISN/ECC South Asia Program Manager provide assistance by means of coordination and facilitation of DoD/DHS support of the BMTF specifically and the BMI in general. Of particular concern is the fashioning of the imminent personnel support for the BMTF and ensuring that such plans are rationalized in light of the current in-country status of the BMI. END ACTION REQUEST.

¶25. (U) Please direct any questions or comments to Barry F. Lory, EXBS Advisor to Afghanistan; +93-070-073-652, extension 4836; lorybf@state.gov or to Jimmie L. Collins, South Asia Regional Program Manager, Office of Export Control Cooperation, 202-647-1778, collinsjl2@state.gov.

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